Amendments to the Claims

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1(Currently amended). A purified interleukin-18 binding protein comprising ~~a functional~~ an IL-18 binding fragment or the whole of the amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO:1, wherein said protein is not a protein encoded by a DNA consisting of nucleotides 35 to 485 of SEQ ID NO:32.

Claim 2 (Cancelled).

3(Previously presented). The purified interleukin-18-binding protein of claim 1, which exhibits a molecular weight of about 40,000 to about 60,000 daltons on SDS-polyacrylamide gel electrophoresis.

4(Previously presented). The purified interleukin-18-binding protein of claim 1, which is obtainable from a mammalian body fluid.

5(Currently amended). An isolated DNA encoding the interleukin-18-binding protein of claim 1, with the proviso that said DNA does not consist of nucleotide ~~residues~~ 35 to 485 of SEQ ID NO:32.

6(Currently amended). The DNA of claim 5, which comprises (i) the nucleotide sequence of SEQ ID NO:32, (ii) a nucleotide sequence homologous to ~~said~~ the nucleotide sequence of SEQ ID NO:32, which nucleotide sequence encodes an amino acid sequence having [[has]] a sequence homology of higher than 61% to the amino acid sequence encoded by ~~of SEQ ID NO:1,~~ SEQ ID NO:32 and a sequence homology of not higher than 61% to the amino acid sequence encoded by SEQ ID NO:33, or (iii) a nucleotide sequence complementary to ~~said~~ either of the nucleotide sequences of (i) or (ii).

7(Previously amended). An interleukin-18-suppressor composition, comprising the interleukin-18-binding protein of claim 1 and a pharmaceutically acceptable adjuvant, diluent, or excipient.

Claims 8 and 9 (Cancelled).

10(Currently amended). An isolated IL-18 binding peptide fragment, which ~~consists of 4 to 29 contiguous amino acid residues in the amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO:1 and has~~ is obtainable by digesting the polypeptide of SEQ ID NO:1, said peptide fragment having an interleukin-18-binding activity.